

CHE E – Newsletter, October 2004

Contents:

- 1) Welcome Letter and Update by Michael Lerner**
- 2) Next Partnership Call – November 16 – "True Grit: How Particulate Matter in Air Affects Our Health"**
- 3) Ecological Medicine at Bioneers**
- 4) Collaborative on Health and the Environment - Northwest (CHE-NW)**
- 5) The Learning and Developmental Disabilities Initiative (LDDI)**
- 6) Fertility and Early Pregnancy Compromise Working Group**
- 7) The Future of Medicine, 2004 – Saturday, November 13**
- 8) The Ontario College of Family Physicians Releases Pesticides Paper**
- 9) EPA Announces First Awards for Protecting Children from Environmental Risks**
- 10) In the News**
- 11) New CHE Partners**

1) WELCOME LETTER AND UPDATE BY MICHAEL LERNER

Dear CHE Partners and Friends:

First, a warm welcome to all of the new CHE Partners who have joined since the last newsletter. CHE is a national partnership of individuals and organizations dedicated to raising the level of scientific and public discourse about environmental contributors to human and ecosystem health. CHE is nonpartisan and will never speak in the name of its Partners without permission. The hallmark of CHE's work includes a deep commitment to disseminating environmental health science, respect for the different ways CHE Partners seek to use the science, civility in our dialogues, and the search for honest opportunities for collaboration.

This month the CHE Partner Call featured policy initiatives that CHE Partners across the country have undertaken to promote science-driven public policies. Charlotte Brody of Health Care Without Harm presented the new CHE Primer (available for download at: www.cheforhealth.org/resources/index.html) that describes the policy initiatives of a number of CHE Partners. Michael Belliveau of the Environmental Health Strategy Center in Maine described his organization's success working with the Learning Disabilities Association and the Maine Medical Association to phase out mercury and flame-retardants. Laurie Valeriano of the Washington Toxics Coalition described similar efforts to Phase out Persistent Bioaccumulative Toxins (PBTs) in Washington. Jay Feldman from Beyond Pesticides described his organization's work to reduce or eliminate the use of pesticides in schools. Debbie Raphael, Toxics Reduction Program Manager for the City and County of San Francisco, described how the new San Francisco Precautionary Principle Ordinance, through the work of the Breast Cancer Fund and others, was passed and implemented in San Francisco.

Whatever view you take of the coming election, science-driven environmental health issues have remained largely below the radar screen of both presidential candidates. Climate change and environmental contaminants, both fundamental global environmental health and human security issues, are scarcely mentioned. As a nonpartisan national partnership concerned with raising the level of scientific and public dialogue about environmental health, it is clear that CHE has much work to do in the coming years to make environmental health a major national concern.

But the trend lines are all moving in the direction of our concern. The science linking environmental contaminants and climate change to human and ecosystem health continues its explosive development. Opinion polls demonstrate sustained public concern with these issues. The European Union remains far ahead of the United States in recognizing the seriousness of climate change and in developing a precautionary approach to safe chemical management. In the U.S., environmental health philanthropy has become a major collective concern over the past five years with the development of the Health and Environmental Funders Network (HEFN). HEFN in turn has created new levels of support for hundreds of organizations working nationally and internationally on these issues. Many states, municipalities, corporations, patient groups, health professional associations, environmental justice groups and other constituencies are making environmental health a priority. It is not unrealistic to believe that four years from now, environmental health will be an inescapable part of the national dialogue in the United States as it is in Europe and in other parts of the world.

This month we are witnessing the rapid growth of two new CHE Groups, the Cancer Working Group and the EMF Discussion Group. The Cancer Working Group has attracted more than 50 CHE Partners and has generated an enthusiastic dialogue about opportunities to work more effectively together. The EMF Discussion Group is smaller but has attracted a critical mass of some of the most knowledgeable scientists and policy educators in the field. You can join the Cancer Working Group by contacting Jeanette Swafford at: jeanette@cheforhealth.org, and the EMF Discussion Group by contacting Eleni Sotos at: eleni@cheforhealth.org. The Fertility/Early Pregnancy Compromise Group recently shifted from a Discussion Group to a Working Group. This Group has grown tremendously; Alison Carlson provides an update on its activities below. All three of these groups generate a good deal of email and hold regular conference calls in addition to the monthly CHE Partner calls, so be prepared if you join.

The central work of CHE is to help contribute to CHE Partners' efforts to take the lead in the work to improve human and ecological health. We look forward to continuing to walk this long road together.

With warm best wishes,

Michael Lerner

CHE Partner

2) NEXT PARTNERSHIP CALL – NOVEMBER 16 – "TRUE GRIT: HOW PARTICULATE MATTER IN AIR AFFECTS OUR HEALTH"

Please join us for the next CHE Partnership Call, "*True Grit: How Particulate Matter in Air Affects Our Health*" on Tuesday, November 16 at 9:00 am Pacific Time/12:00 noon Eastern Time.

Please RSVP to Frieda Nixdorf at: frieda@cheforhealth.org if you would like to join this call.

Featured presenters include:

- **Michael Lipsett, M.D.**, Chief, Exposure Assessment Section, Environmental Health Investigations Branch, California Department of Health Services
- **Peggy Shepard**, Executive Director, West Harlem Environmental Action
- **Deborah Shprentz**, Consultant, American Lung Association
- **Gina Solomon, M.D., M.P.H.**, Senior Scientist, Natural Resources Defense Council and Assistant Clinical Professor of Medicine at the University of California at San Francisco

What: CHE Partnership Call - "**True Grit: How Particulate Matter in Air Affects Our Health**"

When: November 16, 2004 - Tuesday

Time: 9:00 am Pacific Time/12:00 noon Eastern Time

Dial in number: 334-323-9856

Password: CHE ("CHAY")

3) ECOLOGICAL MEDICINE AT BIONEERS

It was a packed house at the Ecological Medicine daylong intensive at Bioneers on October 14th. Leading scientists, thinkers and advocates gave superb presentations focusing on the impact of environmental contaminants in human and ecological health and the various solution-oriented efforts underway to address these impacts. For example, University of California, Berkeley Professor Dr. Tyrone Hayes electrified the audience with his research, which shows how the herbicide Atrazine has led to hermaphroditism in frogs and how this finding relates to human health. Dr. Jane Hightower, a physician in private practice, chronicled the impact of mercury on her fish-eating patients and her ventures into the world of mercury policy. Sharyle Patton of Commonweal focused on human biomonitoring, while Jeanne Rizzo of the Breast Cancer Fund and Bryony Schwan of Women's Voices for the Earth discussed The Campaign for Safe Cosmetics. We were pleased that this event, co-sponsored by CHE and Health Care Without Harm, was a tremendous success. A shorter panel on these topics later in the weekend drew hundreds of people as well.

We have received multiple requests to make copies of speakers' presentations available to the CHE Partnership. Over the next two weeks, CHE will post the speaker's presentations on the CHE website (<http://www.cheforhealth.org/>). The CHE public policy primer, **Our Health and the Health of the Environment: How are They Connected and What Can We Do to Improve Both**, is currently on the CHE web site and can be downloaded at no cost at: <http://www.cheforhealth.org/resources/index.html>.

4) COLLABORATIVE ON HEALTH AND THE ENVIRONMENT - NORTHWEST (CHE-NW)

CHE-NW held its eighth face-to-face meeting since its inception in March 2003 on September 30, 2004 in Seattle. Kate Davies, M.A., D.Phil., professor at Antioch University and chair of CHE-NW's Health and Environmental Links Research Working Group, presented her preliminary findings on the links between chronic health problems and environmental pollution in Washington State. The primary goal of this research is to collect, summarize and map the existing data and determine what gaps need to be addressed. Their preliminary findings suggested the Washington specific data on cancer was excellent, while information regarding neurobehavioral problems was almost non-existent, and the rest of the health endpoints they reviewed still needed more data. They also calculated the environmentally attributable fraction of health care costs for childhood cancers (leukemia and brain cancer, both of which are on the rise). She will release a

report on these preliminary findings in December. The meeting also highlighted the work of two health-affected groups: The Breast Cancer Fund, which has a new office in Seattle directed by Pam Tazioli, and the Washington Chapter of the American Parkinson's Disease Association directed by Pat Noonan. Both organizations have outstanding educational and policy initiatives on environmental contributors to their respective diseases. The next CHE-NW meeting will be December 6, 2004 in Seattle.

CHE-NW's Environmental Justice Working Group met after the CHE-NW meeting. Twenty-five people attended and participants heard from three community groups working on different initiatives, including health concerns related to exposures to cell antennas and seafood safety for immigrant populations. In addition, the group began to discuss ideas that could be integrated into an EJ consensus statement. This statement will be drafted in the next few weeks and refined at the next CHE-NW Environmental Justice Working Group meeting, which will likely be held December 1st in Seattle.

CHE-NW is also working with the Oregon Environmental Council to help organize the first CHE-Oregon meeting on February 3, 2005.

For more information, please contact: Elise Miller, coordinator of LDDI and director of the Institute for Children's Environmental Health, at: emiller@iceh.org.

5) THE LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES INITIATIVE (LDDI)

LDDI will have its first regional meeting on October 27, 2004 at the Kellogg Center at Michigan State University in Lansing, MI. The meeting will highlight research, education and advocacy in regards to neurotoxicants and their impact on brain development. The Learning Disabilities Association (LDA) of Michigan, which is a LDA Healthy Children Project partner, is taking the lead on organizing this meeting with LDDI. Other co-sponsors include: the Association of Children's Mental Health, Michigan Environmental Council, Michigan Council for Maternal and Child Health, American Academy of Pediatrics - Michigan Chapter, the Ecology Center, Bridges 4 Kids, and the Michigan Lead Safe Partnership. Between 75-100 health care professionals, researchers, learning and developmental disabilities groups and child health and environmental health advocates are expected to attend. For more information, please contact: Elise Miller,

coordinator of LDDI and director of the Institute for Children's Environmental Health, at: emiller@iceh.org or Amy Winans, board chair of LDA-Michigan at: ajwinans@aol.com.

6) FERTILITY AND EARLY PREGNANCY COMPROMISE WORKING GROUP

CHE's Fertility and Early Pregnancy Discussion Group has been renamed a "Working Group" as it continues to grow and engage new constituencies. Since our last CHE Newsletter "CHEfertility" update, group membership has more than doubled from 25 to nearly 60 Partners, and we have set up a listserv to share articles, abstracts, comments and announcements directly relevant to environmental contaminant effects on fertility and early pregnancy. (Please note that while we are interested in and often discuss pregnancy outcomes – pre-term birth, low birth weight, preeclampsia, stillbirth etc – for a number of reasons, we choose to focus concerted on ability to conceive and establish a pregnancy.) Our listserv web pages also feature archives of all previous email posts, transcripts of our quarterly teleconferences, a group participant list, and other materials.

Exciting CHE Fertility-inspired developments include a successful effort to establish a Special Interest Group on Reproduction and the Environment within the largest reproductive medicine professional society, the American Society of Reproductive Medicine. At ASRM's Annual Meeting in October, CHE Fertility members Linda Giudice and Alison Carlson facilitated a first-ever meeting for ASRM members interested in this topic. Over 60 people attended including MDs, embryologists, repro physiologists, infertility patient group reps, medical students, nurses, and epidemiologists. An ambitious agenda for the group was discussed, including collaboration with a committee on the environment also recently established within the Society for the Study of Reproduction.

Program planning for a 2005 invitational workshop co-hosted by CHE and the Women's Health @ Stanford Program on the *Science of Environmental Contaminants and Human Fertility* is nearly complete. CHE Fertility members are also considering possibilities for a Congressional staffer briefing near Capitol Hill on this topic as a follow-on to the workshop. On the public, patient and physician education front: articles about infertility (and women's reproductive health) and the environment, authored or co-authored by CHE Fertility members, have been featured in the magazines of the American Fertility Association, Resolve: The National Infertility Association, INCIID (InterNational Council on Infertility Information Dissemination), the San Francisco Medical Association and in UNEP's *Our Planet*.

And finally, CHE Fertility's series of quarterly teleconferences have been highlighting important related research by featuring presentations by researchers from university, repro health clinic and government settings. The next group teleconference is planned for January 5, 2005 and will feature discussion and brainstorming on Infertility Disease Tracking: What Do We Know? What Do We Need? How Do We Get It?

CHE Partners interested in the Fertility and Early Pregnancy Compromise Working Group can contact Alison Carlson at: info@cheforhealth.org.

7) THE FUTURE OF MEDICINE, 2004 – SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 13

What: The Future of Medicine, 2004 - A Conference Exploring the Integration of Alternative and Conventional Health Care in the 21st Century

When: Saturday, November 13, 9:00 am – 6:00 pm

Where: SFSU Student Center, Jack Adams Hall, 1600 Holloway Avenue,
San Francisco, CA

Keynote Presentations and Speakers:

- Sylver Quevedo, MD, MPH, Osher Center for Integrative Medicine, UCSF, Presentation: Culture and Medicine
- Michael Lerner, Ph.D., Commonweal. Presentation: Ecological Medicine and the Emerging Environmental Health Movement

Select Research Panel:

- The New National Research Agenda for Complementary and Alternative Medicine with Leonna Standish, PhD, ND, Bastyr University, Michael Cantwell, MD, California Pacific Medical Center and Marilyn Schlitz, PhD, Institute of Noetic Sciences

Mini-Workshops - with leading experts and health care activists:

Alternative Medicine - An Overview

Bio-Monitoring for Environmental Hazards

Challenges in Running an Integrative Medicine Clinic

Complementary Cancer Treatments

Integrating Chiropractic and Chinese Medicine

Medical Economics, Market Share vs. Patient Care: Physicians Organizing Committee

... and more

\$10 suggested donation.

Nursing CEUs provided for nurses (BRN #00344).

For more information call 415-338-6416 or 415-557-2312.

8) THE ONTARIO COLLEGE OF FAMILY PHYSICIANS PESTICIDES PAPER

The Ontario College of Family Physicians has published a paper titled “Systematic Review of Pesticide Human Health Effects.” It is a comprehensive review of research about the health effects of pesticides including recommendations for family physicians.

The paper can be downloaded at:

<http://www.ocfp.on.ca/English/OCFP/Communications/CurrentIssues/Pesticides/default.asp?s=1>. For more information, please contact Tanya Brown, Campaign Coordinator, Pesticide Action Network North America at: tanya@panna.org.

9) EPA ANNOUNCES FIRST AWARDS FOR PROTECTING CHILDREN FROM ENVIRONMENTAL RISKS

Applications are now being accepted for EPA's first Children's Environmental Health Awards. The awards are designed to increase awareness, stimulate activity, and recognize efforts that protect children from environmental health risks at the local, regional, national and international level. The Children's Environmental Health Awards will recognize individuals, organizations and businesses on an annual basis that are engaged in activities to protect children from environmental health risks.

Applications are due Dec. 15, 2004. For additional information or to obtain an application, go to: <http://yosemite.epa.gov/ochp/ochpweb.nsf/homepage> or call the Office of Children's Health at: 202-564-2188.

10) IN THE NEWS – Selected recent news reports, many from www.EnvironmentalHealthNews.org

Putting it in Perspective: Where does Environmental Health Tracking Fit in the Bigger Picture of Public Health?

California Tracking, The Newsletter of the California Environmental Health Tracking Program, No. 7, Fall 2004

What is Public Health? Public health is defined as organized community efforts aimed at achieving healthy people in healthy communities. These organized efforts are undertaken by public and private organizations, health and environmental professionals, and community leaders and members. The mission of public health is to promote physical and mental health and prevent disease, injury, and disability.

<http://www.catracking.com/sub/nl.htm#ph>

Scrutinizing pharmaceuticals and personal care products in wastewater treatment

Environmental Science & Technology

Many bioactive compounds enter wastewaters and the receiving water bodies without any tests for specific environmental effects. The scope of the problem is huge. To review this report in PDF format, go to:

http://pubs.acs.org/subscribe/journals/esthag-a/38/i20/pdf/101504feature_ternes.pdf

Study Shows Toxin in Breast Milk: 100 percent discovery rate in Northwest samples is 'troubling'

Seattle Post-Intelligencer, Washington, 29 September 2004, Carol Smith

A toxic chemical found in widely used flame retardants has turned up in 100 percent of nursing mothers tested in Washington and other Northwest states.

http://seattlepi.nwsourc.com/local/192899_toxins29.html

Toxin Build-up is Highest in Young: Study Finds More Chemicals in Children than Adults

The Guardian, London, 8 October 2004, Paul Brown

Children as young as nine have more manufactured chemicals in their blood than their grandparents and these substances are suspected of disrupting development and hormones, according to tests on seven volunteer families across the country.

http://www.guardian.co.uk/uk_news/story/0,3604,1322587,00.html

11) NEW CHE PARTNERS

We welcome the new CHE Partners who have joined since the last newsletter. You can find a complete list of all the CHE Partners on the website at

<http://www.cheforhealth.org/>.

ORGANIZATIONS:

American Lung Association of San Francisco/San Mateo

http://www.lungusa2.org/sanfrancisco_sanmateo/

Daly City, CA

The Central Brain Tumor Registry of the United States (CBTRUS)

<http://www.cbtrus.org/>

Berkeley, CA

De Comunidad a Comunidad

Bellingham, WA

Environmental Association for Great Lakes Education (EAGLE)

<http://www.eagle-ecosource.org/>

Duluth, MN

Next Generation Choices Foundation

<http://www.nextgenerationchoicesfoundation.org/>

Middleburg, VA

Preventing Harm Minnesota

<http://www.preventingharmminnesota.org/>

Minneapolis, MN

INDIVIDUALS:

Sarah Battistich, M.D.

Ann Arbor, MI

Germaine Buck Louis, Ph.D., M.S.

Chief & Senior Investigator, Epidemiology Branch

National Institute of Child Health & Human Development

Rockville, MD

Jenny Carless

Santa Cruz, CA

Mary Cordaro

Home Environmental Consultant

Valley Village, CA

Siggy Cox

In Vision

Sausalito, CA

Thérèse Dowd, Ph.D., R.N.

College of Nursing, The University of Akron

Akron, OH

Julia Earl, M.S.

Preventing Harm Minnesota, Coordinator

Women's Cancer Resource Center

Minneapolis, MN

Lorraine Eckstein, Ph.D.

Research Anthropologist

Alaska Community Action on Toxics

Anchorage, AK

Renee Ferre, B.S.N.

Midwest Representative

Marah International/Christians for a Healthy Macon County

Decatur, IL

Karla Fortunato

Deputy Coordinator

Health and Environmental Funders Network (HEFN)

Washington, DC

Diana Hammer, M.P.H.

Community Involvement and Children's Health

US Environmental Protection Agency

Helena, MT

Robert Harrison, M.D., M.P.H.

Professor of Medicine

University of California at San Francisco

San Francisco, CA

Genevieve Howe, M.P.H.

Jamaica Plain, MA

Iona

The Order of the Earth

Frederick, MD

Mary Isham, R.N.

San Francisco, CA

Tess Karwoski, R.N., B.S.N.

University of Michigan

Ann Arbor, MI

Sally LaMont, N.D., LAc

Naturopathic Doctor

Acupuncturist

California Naturopathic Doctors Association

San Rafael, CA

Patricia Lawrence, R.N.

Newburyport, MA

Lin Li, D.Sc.

Senior Program Officer

World Wildlife Fund

Washington DC

Rhoda Nussbaum, M.D.

Kaiser Permanente

San Francisco, CA

Melissa Peffers, M.S.

Environmental Health Scientist

Battelle/Pacific Northwest National Laboratory

Seattle, WA

Nancy Riffer, Ph.D.

Consultant

Syracuse, NY

Gayatri Roshan

Mill Valley, CA

Marjorie Roswell

Baltimore, MD

Shirley Schantz, Ed.D., ARNP

Nursing Projects Director

National Association of School Nursing

Pembroke Pines, FL

Diana Schweickart

Mill Valley, CA

Virginia Shapiro, D.C.

Northland Health and Wellness

Duluth, MN

Marianne Sullivan, M.P.H.

Public Health-Seattle & King County

Seattle, WA

Lawrence S. Witter, D.D.S.

Novato, CA

—

Best wishes,

Eleni Sotos

CHE Program Coordinator

Frieda Nixdorf

CHE Administrative Associate

* * *

Frieda Nixdorf

Administrative Associate

Collaborative on Health and the Environment

P.O. Box 316, Bolinas, CA 94924

ph:415-868-0970,f:415-868-2230

frieda@cheforhealth.org